

## Understanding Jung's Thought

**Thomas J. Farrell**

Professor Emeritus in Writing Studies

University of Minnesota Duluth

[tfarrell@d.umn.edu](mailto:tfarrell@d.umn.edu)

Two new books about the thought of the medieval Catholic theologian St. Thomas Aquinas can help us deepen our understanding of the thought of the 20th-century Swiss Reform psychiatrist and psychological theorist C. G. Jung, M.D. (1875-1961):

(1) Bernhard Blankenhorn's book *Mystery of Union with God: Dionysian Mysticism in Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas* (Catholic U of America P, 2015) and

(2) Daria Spezzano's book *The Glory of God's Grace: Deification According to St. Thomas Aquinas* (Sapientia P of Ave Maria U, 2015; distributed by Catholic U of America P).

On the dust jacket of his book, Bernhard Blakenhorn, O.P., is identified as an associate professor of theology at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (also known as the Angelicum) in Rome.

In the acknowledgments in her book, Daria Spezzano of Providence College thanks Blakenhorn, among others, for "encouragement, helpful suggestions, and constructive criticism of [her] manuscript" (viii).

Now, when Blankenhorn uses the expression "Dionysian mysticism," he is referring to the anonymous medieval author known variously as Dionysius the Areopagite, Denys the Areopagite, and Pseudo-Dionysius, whose writings appeared in the early sixth. The anonymously author is not St. Paul's Athenian convert known as Dionysius the Areopagite.

Thus Blankenhorn is not referring to the ancient Greek god Dionysius, or to ancient Dionysian spirituality and ritual practices, which Jung explicitly refers to.

Nevertheless, I argue that what Blankenhorn refers to as Dionysian mysticism involves the depths of the human psyche that Jung refers to as Dionysian.

So I see a connection between Blankenhorn's and Jung's use of the term Dionysian. In the present essay, I will explore that happy coincidence in terminology.

In the 1930s, Jung used the term "Dionysian" to characterize the psycho-spiritual process involved in personal psychological individuation.

See Jung's 1,600-page commentary titled *Nietzsche's Zarathustra: Notes of the Seminar Given in 1934-1939 by C. G. Jung*, 2 vols., edited by James L. Jarrett (Princeton UP, 1988; see the index entry on Dionysos/Dionysian for specific page references).

What Jung refers to as active imagination, such as his own dangerous self-experimentation, involves the spirit of Dionysian mysticism.

Mourning the death of a loved one in a healthy way involves the optimal spirit of Dionysian mysticism.

But breakdowns involve the spirit of Dionysian mysticism gone awry, which can lead to suicide.

Female and Male puberty rites involve the spirit of Dionysian mysticism, but it can go awry and lead to suicide.

Mid-life crises such as Dante's and Jung's involve the spirit of Dionysian mysticism.

Profound mystical experiences such as Jung's in 1944 involve the optimal spirit of Dionysian mysticism.

Now, at times, Dionysian mysticism can be accompanied by the psycho-spiritual process of deification.

Evidently, Jung's profound mystical experiences in 1944 involved the psycho-spiritual process of deification.

But the psycho-spiritual process of deification is comparatively rare.

Also see Norman Russell's book *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (Oxford UP, 2004); A. N. Williams' book *The Ground of Union: Deification in Aquinas and Palamas* (Oxford UP, 1999).

### **Dionysian Mysticism and Jung**

Now, Dionysian mysticism involves profound mystical experiences such as Jung's profound mystical experiences in 1944 and St. Ignatius Loyola's profound mystical experiences in the 16th century.

St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), the founder of the Jesuit religious order in the Roman Catholic Church, had profound mystical experiences. He eventually wrote up a guide-book known as the *Spiritual Exercises*, based on so-called spiritual exercises that worked for him. Spiritual exercises are forms of meditation and contemplation involving the imagination. The book titled the *Spiritual Exercises* contains detailed instructions about how to proceed to engage one's imagination in meditation and contemplation. However, there is no guarantee that engaging in meditation and contemplation will result in one's having profound mystical experiences, as St. Ignatius Loyola did. In other words, Dionysian mysticism is not a frequent experience.

Concerning St. Ignatius Loyola, see W. W. Meissner's book *Ignatius of Loyola: The Psychology of a Saint* (Yale UP, 1992).

Concerning Jesuit spirituality as one way to proceed to cultivate the unio mentalis, see James Martin's book *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life* (HarperOne, 2010).

Because Blankenhorn discusses not only St. Thomas Aquinas but also St. Albert the Great, I also want to note that Jung discusses both of them in his last major book, *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy*, 2nd ed., translated by R. F. C. Hull (Princeton UP, 1970; orig. German ed. in two parts, 1955 and 1956; see the index entries for each man's name for specific page references).

Jung himself thought of *Mysterium Coniunctionis* as having a third part: Marie Louise von Franz's book *Aurora Consurgens: A Document Attributed to Thomas Aquinas on the Problem of Opposites in Alchemy*, edited with a commentary by Marie-Louise von Franz, translated by R. F. C. Hull and A. S. B. Glover with parallel Latin and English texts (Toronto: Inner City Books, 2000; orig. English translation, 1966; orig. parallel Latin and German ed., 1957).

In *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (1970), Jung discusses (1) the unio naturalis (488), (2) the unio mentalis (see the index for specific page references), and (3) the unio mystica (443, 537, 540).

Basically, the unio naturalis refers to the human condition.

Jung sees the unio mentalis as representing the special challenge of psycho-spiritual inner work that everybody undertakes, or should undertake, in the second half of life. However, he does not rule out the possibility that certain people may start cultivating the unio mentalis earlier in their lives.

Like Christian spirituality generally, Jungian psychoanalysis involves deliberately and self-consciously cultivating the unio mentalis.

In secular American culture, the unio mentalis is represented by Ralph Waldo Emerson's self-reliance. Emersonian self-reliance depends on a healthy inner relationship with the Anima in one's psyche.

In secular American culture, the unio mentalis is also represented by Henry David Thoreau's book *Walden*, edited by J. Lyndon Shanley (Princeton UP, 1971; orig. ed., 1854).

In Pope Francis' eco-encyclical, he does not mention Thoreau's *Walden*, even though it can be connected with the spirit of his encyclical.

See Lawrence Buell's books *Emerson* (Belknap P/ Harvard UP, 2003) and *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Belknap P/ Harvard UP, 1995).

Historically in American culture, there has been no shortage of writings about the unio mentalis, as Donald L. Gelpi, S.J., shows in his book *Varieties of transcendental Experience: A Study in Constructive Postmodernism* (Michael Glazier Book/ Liturgical P, 2000).

Jung sees the unio mystica as the highest possible psycho-spiritual experience involving profound mystical experiences – such as the profound mystical experiences that Jung reported having himself in 1944 when he was hospitalized with a grave illness – after he had completed the first draft of *Mysterium Coniunctionis*.

## **Deification and Jung**

Evidently, Jung was not aware of the patristic and medieval Christian tradition of thought about deification. Or at least he does not happen to advert explicitly to it in his lengthy commentary titled *Nietzsche's Zarathustra* (1988), mentioned above, but he does discuss the psycho-spiritual process of deification (448, 657, 816, 1526, 1527, 1533, 1538).

According to Jung, Dionysian mysticism involving profound mystical experiences is connected with the psychological experience of deification.

Arguably the spirit of Dionysian mysticism is symbolically represented in Western literature in Odysseus' visit to the underworld in the *Odyssey*, in Aeneas' visit to the underworld in Virgil's *Aeneid*, and in Dante-the-character's visit to the underworld in the *Divine Comedy*.

In Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Dante-the-character is accompanied on his visit to the Inferno and the Purgatorio by a character named Virgil. But then Virgil disappears as a guide, and the character named Beatrice emerges as Dante's new guide.

The guide named Virgil symbolically represents what Jung refers to as the Wise Old Man archetype, and the guide named Beatrice symbolically represents what Jung refers to as the Anima archetype.

Arguably all men and all women at all times have had to work out working relationships with the inner guides in their psyches that Jung refers to as the Wise Old Man archetype and the Anima archetype.

What Jungian psychoanalyst Erich Neumann refers to as the Great Mother archetype is what I refer to as the Anima archetype in the human psyche of both men and women.

Concerning the Anima archetype in the human psyche, see Neumann's books *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, translated by R. F. C. Hull (Princeton UP, 1954; orig. German ed., 1949) and *The Great Mother: An analysis of the Archetype*, 2nd ed., translated by Ralph Manheim (Princeton UP, 1963; orig. German ed., 1954).

Now, the kind of suffering that Jung himself experienced when he was hospitalized in 1944 was involved in his experience of Dionysian mysticism.

In the greatest story ever told, the historical Jesus undergoes suffering and death by crucifixion.

Concerning the crucifixion of the historical Jesus, see Paula Fredriksen's book *Jesus of Nazareth: King of the Jews* (Knopf, 1999).

In real-life, excruciating suffering is often involved in the experience of Dionysian mysticism. (But not all experiences of excruciating suffering involve Dionysian mysticism.)

Now, as everybody knows, the grieving Jewish followers of the crucified Jesus deified him and proclaimed him to somehow be God.

In the depths of their mourning their loss, they experienced the kind of excruciating suffering often associated with Dionysian mysticism.

Out of the depths of their mourning their loss emerged the symbols of deification and resurrection.

Their symbols of deification and resurrection reveal to us the psychodynamics involved in the psyche.

In addition to proclaiming their deceased friend to be the Christ, the mourning Jewish followers of the historical Jesus in effect made the mythic Christ figure their inner guide, their symbolic representation of the Wise Old Man archetype.

Subsequently in the medieval Christian tradition of thought, the Blessed Virgin Mary, in effect, became the symbolic representation of the Anima archetype.

In Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Beatrice is based on the real-life Beatrice that Dante-the-poet knew, but the Beatrice figure in the Paradiso is a composite expression of different women Dante-the-poet knew. So is the Virgil figure in the Inferno and the Purgatorio.

In real-life, each person constellates both the Wise Old Man archetype and the Anima archetype in their psyches around experiences of real-life men and women respectively, not just around symbolic representations of the wise Old Man archetype and the Anima archetype such as the Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

As Dante understood, medieval Christians consigned all ancient non-Christians, even ancient pagans they considered to be virtuous pagans, to the Inferno for eternity. It was just their tough luck that they had not been born in time to benefit from the supposed Christian revelation.

Their belief about the tough luck of even virtuous pagans makes Dante-the-poet's choice of the pagan Roman poet Virgil as the guide for Dante-the-character in the Inferno and the Purgatorio instructive. Most of us shop around for real-life guides to help us constellate the Wise Old Man archetype in our psyches.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Christ is regarded as the ultimate inner guide, along with the Blessed Virgin Mary. But the canonized saints are celebrated as real-life guides to help Catholics live virtuous lives. In other words, the canonized saints may help Catholics round out in their psyches the constellation of the Wise Old Man archetype and the Anima archetype.

In the secular prestige culture in Western culture, canonical literary writers can serve a similar function.

Concerning the secular prestige culture in American culture, see Harold Bloom's new book *The Daemon Knows: Literary Greatness and the American Sublime* (Spiegel & Grau, 2015).

When readers of imaginative literature experience what Bloom refers to as the sublime, they are experiencing the spirit of Dionysian mysticism in the human psyche.

Similarly, when literary artists compose works of imaginative literature that can enable capable readers to experience the sublime, those literary artists are themselves exploring the spirit of Dionysian mysticism in their psyches.

Unfortunately, experiences of Dionysian mysticism do not always involve experiencing the psycho-spiritual process of deification. Deification involves the optimal experience of Dionysian mysticism.

In *Walden*, Thoreau recounts and commemorates his communing with Nature in the spirit of Dionysian mysticism.

In his mid-life crisis, Jung engaged in the dangerous self-experimentation that involved what he the technique of imagistic meditation that he later came to refer to as active imagination. His various writings about this dangerous practice have been collected together in the book *Jung on Active Imagination*, edited and introduced by Joan Chodorow (Princeton UP, 1997).

## **Jung and the Story of Adam and Eve**

Now, Jung was enormously fascinated with ancient gnostic thought – so much so that he has at times been characterized as a modern gnostic (whatever that means).

In Willis Barnstone's 1,500-page book titled *The Restored New Testament: A New Translation with Commentary, Including the Gnostic Gospels Thomas, Mary, and Judas* (Norton, 2009), Barnstone notes that ancient gnostics tended to interpret the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis as a kind of Promethean myth.

As everybody knows, St. Augustine, building on hints in St. Paul's texts, interpreted the story of Adam and Eve as introducing so-called original sin. That interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve turns the gnostic Promethean interpretation on its head. In the gnostic Promethean interpretation, Eve emerges as the hero guiding Adam to join her in heroic resistance to God's tyranny. But in the original-sin interpretation, Eve emerges as the villain leading Adam into

villainy – villainy for which the entire human race is to pay for, for all the time of this earth, because God is too stubborn to forgive them for their disobedience – and too wrathful.

Of course the original-sin interpretation contributes to the interpretation of the historical Jesus' crucifixion as somehow “redeeming” those who “believe” in him, the interpretation associated with St. Paul's contribution to the formulation of the doctrine of original sin.

As everybody knows, orthodox Christianity accepted St. Augustine's interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve as supposedly involving so-called original sin.

Basically, orthodox Christianity rejected gnostic thought.

### **Teilhard de Chardin and the Story of Adam and Eve**

But it is hard to reconcile the doctrine of original sin with evolutionary theory.

As a result, the French Jesuit paleontologist and religious writer Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), mentioned above, set aside the doctrine of original sin in his posthumously published visionary book *The Human Phenomenon*, translated by Sarah Appleton-Weber (Sussex Academic P, 1999; an earlier English translation by Bernard Wall was published in 1959 as *The Phenomenon of Man*).

For Teilhard's view of the spiritual life, see his book *The Divine Milieu*, translated by Sion Cowell (Sussex Academic P, 2004; an earlier English translation was published in 1960 as *The Divine Milieu: An Essay on the Interior Life*, but the translator was not identified).

Unfortunately, the Roman Catholic Church has not yet officially declared Teilhard to be a doctor of the church – nor has it yet formally and officially expunged the doctrine of original sin and denounced it as anathema.

In American culture, Protestant fundamentalists have not adjusted their interpretations of the two accounts of creation in Genesis in ways that are not inconsistent with up-to-date evolutionary theory.

See James H. Fetzer's book *Render unto Darwin: Philosophical Aspects of the Christian Right's Crusade against Science* (Open Court, 2007).

But merely setting aside the doctrine of original sin, as Teilhard does, is not as bold as it would be to reverse St. Augustine's original-sin interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve in favor of the ancient gnostic interpretation of that story as a kind of Promethean myth.

But apart from evolutionary theory, does it make any difference how we interpret the story of Adam and Eve? After all, ancient gnostics lived centuries before modern evolutionary theory emerged. So are there any other reasons to favor their interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve?

Historically, the original-sin interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve was and still is a major strut in the conceptual and social construction of male patriarchal culture in Western culture.

Plato and Aristotle and certain other ancient Greek thinkers recognized that we humans are not born virtuous. But they did not blame this admitted lack of virtue on a supposed original sin. Instead, they recommended the cultivation of virtue. In light of their example, it really is hard to understand why the doctrine of original sin appealed to St. Augustine and other Christians.

### **Eve and the Anima Archetype**

In the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis, Eve is an Anima figure (i.e., she is a feminine character who symbolically represents the Anima archetype in the human psyche). As the story unfolds in Genesis, Eve is portrayed as the one who listens to the talking snake. Today talking Animals are a regular feature in stories for children. But the story of Adam and Eve and the talking snake and the talking monotheistic deity was undoubtedly designed not only for ancient Hebrew children to hear but also for ancient Hebrew adults to hear and ponder.

Arguably all men and all women at all times have had difficulty working out a healthy and vibrant relationship with the Anima archetype in their psyches. Working out such a relationship with the Anima archetype is the major challenge in men's and in women's lives in the second half of life.

In the *Divine Comedy*, Dante-the-poet vividly commemorates his proverbial mid-life crisis. He creates a character named Dante who visits the underworld (also known as the unconscious). Dante-the-character is not exactly impressive, to put it mildly. Evidently, Dante-the-poet had a self-effacing sense of humor about himself. As Dante-the-poet portrays the character known as Beatrice, she is another Anima figure. To be sure, Dante named her after a young woman he had known; but the character Beatrice that he portrays is a composite figure based on Dante's experience of a number of women.

Similarly, the character named Virgil is a composite figure based in part on the historical Roman poet named Virgil. Just as the composite character named Beatrice symbolically represent the Anima archetype in the human psyche, so too the composite figure named Virgil symbolically represents the Wise Old Man archetype in the human psyche. All men and all women have both the Anima archetype and the Wise Old Man archetype in their psyches.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, the Blessed Virgin Mary is an Anima figure, albeit one based on the historical mother of the historical Jesus. Of course the veneration of Mary in the Roman Catholic tradition includes not only men but also women. Nevertheless, the figure of Mary that is venerated is best understood as an Anima figure – that is, as a figure based on projections of the Anima archetype in men's and women's psyches.

For Christians, the mythic figure known as the Christ symbolically represents the Wise Old Man archetype in the human psyche.



As these three divergent examples of Anima figures show, there is great variety in portraying Anima figures – including of course a wide range of pagan goddesses. However, in the present essay it is not my purpose to discuss Anima figures in greater detail.

Concerning the Anima archetype in the human psyche, see Neumann's books, mentioned above, *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (1954) and *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype* (1963).

What Neumann refers to as the Great Mother archetype is what I refer to as the Anima archetype in the human psyche.

### **Jung and the Anima Archetype**

Jung went through the proverbial mid-life crisis, just as Dante and Nietzsche did. During Jung's experience of the mid-life crisis, he engaged in self-experimentation using a technique of imagistic meditation that he came to refer to as active imagination. He found his active imagination exercises so helpful that he subsequently encouraged other people to use this form of meditation. His various statements about this technique of imagistic meditation have been collected together in the book *Jung on Active Imagination* (1997).

Evidently, Jung engaged in this kind of imagistic meditation by himself. But by doing this, he set a bad example. I would urge people not to engage in this kind of self-experimentation by themselves because archetypes in the human psyche are powerful enough to overpower ego-consciousness, resulting in a psychotic episode. So it is advisable to talk with a psychotherapist or spiritual director once a day when you use this kind of imagistic meditation.

Figuratively speaking, in using this form of imagistic meditation, Jung in effect visited the underworld – just as Odysseus visits the underworld in the Homeric epic the *Odyssey* and just as Aeneas visits the underworld in Virgil's epic the *Aeneid* and just as Dante-the-character visits the underworld in the *Divine Comedy*. In other words, Jung visited his unconscious.

Jung's verbal and artistic record of his visits to the unconscious through the use of active imagination can now be seen in the over-sized book titled *The Red Book: Liber Novus*, edited and introduced by Sonu Shamdasani, translated by Mark Kyburz, John Peck, and Sonu Shamdasani (Norton, 2009). A more compact and portable version of this work, but without Jung's art works, has been published as *The Red Book: Liber Novus: A Reader's Edition* (Norton, 2009).

On page 370 of the over-sized edition, Shamdasani has included Jung's record of the following message he received from the Anima archetype in his psyche on January 16, 1916:

"If I am not conjoined through the uniting of the Below [i.e., the unconscious] and the Above [i.e., ego-consciousness], I break down into three parts: [1] The serpent [e.g., the talking snake who talks to Eve], and in that or some other Animal form I roam, living nature daimonically,

arousing fear and longing. [2] The human soul, living forever within you. [3] The celestial soul, as such dwelling with the Gods, far from you and unknown to you, appearing in the form of a bird [e.g., the dove is the traditional Christian symbol of the Holy Spirit]. Each of these three parts then is independent [of the other parts in the male psyche]” [bracketed material added by me, not by the editors]

(This passage appears on page 577 of the *Reader's Edition*.)

I refer to this passage as the revelation given to Jung by the Anima archetype in his psyche. It is a revelation for all men about the Anima archetype in their psyches.

You see, men such as the fictional Adam and the fictional character named Dante need to be guided in their lives by the Anima archetype in their psyches. When men do not have a constructive working relationship with the Anima archetype in their psyches, then they will be subjected to having the Anima archetype in their psyches arouse fear and longing in them (i.e., in their psyches).

But this is also true for women.

In patristic and medieval times, certain Christian writers had no problem with discussing the possibility that the mythic figure known as Christ could deify them.

After all, if we are made in the image and likeness of God, as the Bible says we are, then it would seem to follow that we are made for deification – this is our common human destiny – to be like God in some sense.

But in the natural course of our lives, men and women need to work out a healthy relationship with the Anima archetype in their psyches before they are ready for the psycho-spiritual experience of Dionysian mysticism and deification.

But I want to say that these psychological developments are not quick and easy for men and women to work through from the onset of their proverbial mid-life crises onward in the second half of their lives. In Jung's case, he cultivated the *unio mentalis* for approximately three decades before he himself had profound mystical experiences in 1944 when he was hospitalized.

However, many Jesuits cultivate the *unio mentalis* by practicing Jesuit spirituality, but without ever having the kind of profound mystical experiences that St. Ignatius Loyola had.

To take a mundane example, we could liken the inner work that men and women need to undertake to work out a healthy and viable relationship with the Anima archetype in their psyches, to undergoing something like the character Dante's extended visit to the Inferno and Purgatorio – with the character Virgil as his guide. Virgil represents the Wise Old Man archetype in the human psyche. Those two fellows took in all the sights in the Inferno and the Purgatorio. Beatrice, the Anima figure, appears only when Dante-the-character is ready to enter the Paradisio in his grand tour, at which point Virgil disappears as Dante's guide.

Regardless of how long it takes, all men and women face the challenge in the second half of their lives to work out a healthy relationship with the Anima archetype in their psyches – and so all women in the second half of their lives, as Jean Houston suggests in her book *The Hero and the Goddess: The Odyssey as Mystery and Initiation* (Ballantine Books, 1992).

Dante-the-character's transition from having Virgil as his guide to having Beatrice as his guide involves the inner transition that all men and women need to make in the second half of life as they cultivate the unio mentalis.

### **Bakan on Agency and Communion**

Next, I want to discuss David Bakan's book *The Duality of Human Existence: An Essay on Psychology and Religion* (Rand McNally, 1966).

In it, Bakan in psychology at the University of Chicago works with two key dimension of the human psyche: (1) agency and (2) communion. (Of course he was not the first author ever to work with these two terms)

By definition, a person who embodies optimal forms of both agency and communion would be described as a psychologically androgynous person.

On the negative side, individuals may be seriously under-developed in either agency or communion – or both.

Also see Vicki S. Helgeson's research about agency and communion that she reports in her 700-page textbook *The Psychology of Gender*, now in its 4th edition (Person/ Prentice Hall, 2011; 1st ed., 2002).

Granted, we at times may make impulsive decisions about how to act (agency). However, when we deliberate before we act, our deliberations involve the Wise Old Man in our psyches inasmuch as this archetype has been constellated in our psyches.

I claim that the character named Virgil in Dante's *Divine Comedy* symbolically represents a composite masculine figure in Dante-the-poet's psyche that can be understood as an example of the Wise Old Man archetype in the human psyche.

Similarly, the Wise Old Man archetype that we have constellated in our psyches involves a composite of our learning experiences about how to act in public that we use to guide our decision making as we enact our agency.

I also claimed that the character named Beatrice symbolically represents a composite feminine figure that can be understood as an example of the Anima archetype in the human psyche.

Similarly, the Anima archetype that we have constellated in our psyches involves a composite of our learning experiences about how to experience and express our inner sense of relatedness that we use to guide our ongoing sense of openness and relatedness and communion.

Optimal Agency = Wise Old Man Archetype.

Optimal Communion = Anima Archetype.

Optimal Agency + Optimal Communion = Androgynous Person.

Dionysian Mysticism + Deification = Optimal Person.

No doubt it is admirable that certain persons such as Jung in 1944 and St. Ignatius Loyola in the 16th century have had profound mystical experiences.

But the vast majority of human persons are not likely to have profound mystical experiences.

However, the vast majority of human persons are capable of cultivating the unio mentalis – and of cultivating virtue as Plato and Aristotle conceived of it.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, American Catholics and non-Catholics should be thankful that Bernhard Blankenhorn's book about Dionysian mysticism and that Daria Spezzano's book about deification have been published.

Those two timely books have brought the terms Dionysian mysticism and deification into currency in American Catholic circles – and thereby made a positive contribution to American culture today.

By using terminology that C. G. Jung uses, each author helps deepen our understanding of Jung's vital thought.